QRA

MAY 2023 UPDATE



WHAT WE DO:

QRA is charged with managing and coordinating the Government's program of **recovery and reconstruction** works within disaster-affected communities, with a focus on working with our state and local government partners to deliver best practice administration of public reconstruction and resilience funds. QRA is also the state's lead agency responsible for **disaster recovery and resilience policy**, working collaboratively with agencies and stakeholders to improve risk reduction and disaster preparedness.

OUR VISION:

Stronger, safer, resilient Queensland communities.

OUR PURPOSE:

Coordinate action to improve the resilience of Queensland communities and facilitate locally-led disaster recovery.

DISASTER ASSISTANCE

DISASTER ASSISTANCE AND RESILIENCE GRANTS PROGRAM

QRA is currently administering a recovery and reconstruction program under the joint Commonwealth State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) worth in excess of \$6.6 billion arising from 32 events from the 2019-20 to 2022-23 disaster seasons in the delivery and/or acquittal phase.

CURRENT STATEWIDE PROGRAM



MAY

In May, QRA's activity in administering disaster assistance and resilience grants in Queensland continued. During the month, QRA officers facilitated the Commonwealth's assurance review of the state's 2021-22 DRFA Claim – an important step to securing the Commonwealth's \$670 million+ contribution to the state for DRFA assistance delivered in the 2021-22 financial year.

A key activity in May has been to work with councils and communities that have recently been impacted by the north-west flooding events and other recent disaster events to undertake damage assessments and compile funding submissions to progress recovery and reconstruction works. During the month, the state also secured an extra \$5 million extraordinary funding package to help flood-affected north-west communities with recovery costs, resilience initiatives and mental health support.

Another focus for May has been to support councils and state agencies to meet the pending 30 June 2023 deadline for completion of the reconstruction program of work associated with the 11 events of the 2020-21 disaster season. Councils have all indicated works are expected to be completed on time, or otherwise have sought and obtained extensions of time for delivery where extenuating circumstances have arisen.

RESILIENCE AND RECOVERY

The Resilience and Recovery team within QRA provides leadership, coordination, direction and advice for the development and implementation of disaster resilience and recovery planning, policy, funding, and support.

To deliver on this commitment, roles and responsibilities are dispersed between and across levels of government and with key stakeholders.

RECOVERY

QRA works extensively on natural disaster preparedness and recovery planning with stakeholders and communities impacted by major disaster events, increasing capability and awareness through active participation and providing support for local recovery governance.

Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements activations – 2022-23 disaster season

Queensland has activated DRFA assistance for 57 Local Government Areas across 7 events in 2022-23:

- 1. South Queensland East Coast Low, July 2022
- 2. South West Trough and Flooding event, September 2022
- 3. South East Queensland Severe Storms, 22-23 September 2022
- 4. Southern Queensland Severe Weather, 18 October – 23 November 2022
- 5. Whitsunday Rainfall and Flooding, 30 November – 1 December 2022
- 6. Northern and Central Queensland Monsoon and Flooding, 20 December 2022 30 April 2023
- 7. Western Downs Fires, 30 January 2023 24 March 2023

Comparison with 2021/2022

Disaster Season	Number of Events	LGAs activated	LGAs activated more than once
2022-2023	7	57	3
2021-2022	9	66	42

Predictions for the change of phases within the El Nino Southern Oscillation, from La Nina to El Nino in the upcoming months may see a change to drier, hotter conditions for Queensland. After a significant wet season leading to increased vegetation growth, there may be heightened risk of bushfire across the State. Engagement with Local Governments, other stakeholders, and the community

Throughout the month of May, the Recovery team continued to engage with many Local Government Areas across the State. QRA Resilience and Recovery officers (RRO) travelled to Isaac Regional Council and Central Highlands Regional Council to discuss Local Resilience Action Plans (LRAP) developed under the Resilient Queensland program of work. In addition, the RROs also inspected new flood gauges and cameras in the Isaac Regional Council area which were funded through the Queensland Resilience and Risk Reduction Fund.

The Recovery team also visited the far-north of the state and met with Napranum Aboriginal Shire Council and Mapoon Aboriginal Shire Council to discuss, review and update their Recovery Sub-plan and Local Resilience Action Plans.

In May, Disaster Funding Arrangement training was also delivered by RROs in Fraser Coast, Bundaberg and North Burnett Regional Council areas.

More broadly, RROs continue to engage with local governments on pre-season planning and developing recovery capability.

Northern and Central Queensland Monsoon and Flooding, 20 December 2022

Continuous rainfall throughout December 2022 and into April 2023 caused significant long-term flooding and isolation for many councils in North West Queensland. Among the 45 councils activated for the disaster event, Burke Shire Council, Boulia Shire Council, Carpentaria Shire Council, Cloncurry Shire Council, Doomadgee Aboriginal Shire Council, and Mount Isa City Council have been most heavily impacted and required immediate support.

In the first week of May, CEO Jake Ellwood undertook an extensive road tour of the affected region and included the shires of Burke, Carpentaria, Doomadgee and Mount Isa. During the trip, Jake met with council CEOs and Mayors to get an understanding of the damage, associated recovery challenges and recovery efforts to date. Environmental

QRA

impacts are still being assessed across the region, however it is clear that substantial damage has occurred to natural and built assets in the region's National Parks, cultural heritage sites, as well as the natural landscape. This visit has informed the continuing development of recovery packages and programs for the region.

The reopening of the region's road network has had a positive impact on the affected communities, allowing critical supply chains to return to business as usual, allowing food, fuel, and building and reconstruction materials to be delivered. Significant reconstruction works are still ongoing and will take several years to complete.

In May, RROs worked with Burke Shire Council and Doomadgee Aboriginal Shire Council on the ongoing development of Event Specific Local Recovery plans (ESLRP). Burke Shire Council has since presented this plan to Council and it has been formally endorsed.



QRA Recovery officers meeting with Burke Shire Council in Burketown

As part of ongoing recovery efforts, a QRA RRO and officer from Queensland's Department of Energy and Public Works met with Burke Shire Council's Local Recovery Coordinator to visit several flood-affected properties to ascertain the need for temporary accommodation in the region. QRA Regional Liaison Officers and RROs continue to work alongside councils, state agencies and Non-Government Organisations to support the recovery effort across the region.



QRA Recovery officer, Burke Shire staff, and DEPW staff travelling through Burke Shire Council to assess accommodation needs

DRFA Category C & D extraordinary assistance packages in delivery

2022-23 Northern and Central Qld Monsoon and Flooding event

QRA has been working with state Functional Recovery Groups and agencies to develop a suite of exceptional circumstances funding packages to support families and small businesses, primary producers and not-for-profit organisations severely impacted by the Northern and Central Qld Monsoon and Flooding event 2023.

Phase one and two of the Category C & D packages comprise:

Phase 1 – \$12 million	Phase 2 – \$5 million	
Primary producers	Mental Health	
Grants of up to \$75,000 are available for affected producers to hire or purchase equipment and materials, clean up, remove debris, replace fencing and other costs associated with the recovery process.	\$1 million for community mental health to deliver targeted services to the people of Boulia, Burke, Carpentaria, Doomadgee and Mount Isa, supporting individuals, families and business owners who are doing it tough.	
Small business and Not For Profits	Local Recovery and Resilience Grants	
Grants of up to \$50,000 are available for affected small businesses and not for profits to hire or purchase equipment and materials, clean up, remove debris, replace or repair damaged infrastructure and stock and other costs associated with the recovery process.	\$4 million – grants of \$1 million each for the councils of Boulia, Burke, Carpentaria and Doomadgee to help with immediate recovery needs, upgrading damaged community infrastructure, buying equipment critical to community response, and to help build back to a more resilient standard.	
Livestock recovery		
\$6 million - Coordinated livestock support and disposal package is to reimburse primary producers, local governments and non- government organisations for the extraordinary costs of undertaking livestock welfare activities in impacted areas.		

QRA is continuing to work with councils, state agencies and the Commonwealth to determine what further recovery assistance and support may be required.

QRA

2021-22 Southern Queensland Floods

QRA continues to work with other state departments and the Australian government on the delivery of the jointly funded \$2 billion Category C & D Exceptional Circumstances Programs to assist recovery and build disaster resilience following the 2021-22 Southern Queensland Floods.

Key programs within this extensive program include the \$741 million Resilient Homes Fund and a suite of projects aimed at improving flood risk knowledge, awareness and warning systems.

QRA has also commenced the monitoring and evaluation of the extraordinary assistance package for the 2021-22 Southern Queensland Flooding event. The evaluations will examine the effectiveness, efficiency, appropriateness and implementation of the programs and consider whether the programs support disaster affected communities to become more sustainable and resilient. QRA has developed an Overarching Disaster Recovery Evaluation Framework, which will form the basis for the evaluations undertaken and reporting developed.



As at 29 May 2023, 6233 homeowners have registered their interest in the Resilient Homes Fund with 4846 registrations active. Of these, 663 people registered their interest in the Voluntary Home Buy-Back program, 1522 in the house-raising and 1886 in the retrofit, with 775 people unsure which option is best suited to their individual needs.

Rollout of the Voluntary Home Buy-Back component of the Resilient Homes Fund has continued in Brisbane, Ipswich, Logan, Sunshine Coast, Fraser Coast, Gympie, Moreton Bay, Lockyer Valley, Goondiwindi, Somerset, Gold Coast and Noosa local government areas. As at 29 May, there have been 487 valuation inspections undertaken, 466 offers presented, 366 offers accepted and 223 contracts settled. Demolition of purchased properties has also commenced in multiple Councils, with 59 scheduled and 34 complete.

Further details: <u>Resilient Homes Fund Eligibility and</u> <u>funding factsheet</u>

Property Level Flood Information Portals

Procurement for the Property Level Flood Information Portals ("the Portals") continues, with offers currently being evaluated in order to deliver the project. The Portals project has the principal aim of assisting residents to understand, be more informed and better prepared for future flooding events by giving them access to flood risk information specific to their property.

Delivery of the Portals will enable any member of the public in an eligible local government area to enter their address into a locally hosted platform and obtain key information about flooding at their property. Where data is limited, the system will still be implemented using existing datasets and allow for updates as new data becomes available.

The project is funded under the \$741 million Resilient Homes Fund.

Flood studies, risk assessment and management strategies and intelligence systems (WP₃)

\$18.25 million is available to 36 councils across 127 projects to invest in flood studies, flood risk management plans, and flood warning intelligence systems, so they're better prepared for the threat of natural disaster.

This package is one of three made available through the \$31 million Flood Risk Management Program, which is funded through the 2021-22 DRFA extraordinary assistance package.

Other packages under the program include support for community engagement and education around disaster preparedness; and for remote sensing technology to create 3D maps and models of environments, to better understand potential risks.

QRA has established a Peer Review and Technical Advisory Panel to further support councils in delivering their funded flood risk management projects under the Flood Risk Management Program. The Peer Review and Technical Advisory Panel aims to ensure that studies delivered under the program align with industry best practice and guidelines. Councils are now starting to access the panel as they start the procurement process for their projects.

Emergency Response Fund – Flood Warning Infrastructure Network Project (FWIN 2.0)

A total of \$7 million is being made available through the \$75 million Emergency Response Fund for Queensland Flood Warning Infrastructure across 23 councils impacted by the 2022 South East Queensland flooding event. All elements of Flood Warning Systems will be eligible for funding under this program. The QRA will be engaging with the 23 impacted councils, TMR and the Bureau of Meteorology in June 2023 to implement delivery of this program.



Statewide Assessment of Flood Risk Factors

Statewide Assessment of Flood Risk Factors Technical Report and website content, with the interactive map has now been published on the QRA website.

The Statewide Assessment of Flood Risk Factors delivers Queensland's first ever comprehensive statewide assessment of flood risk management needs in Queensland, based on analysis of key flood risk factors across every Queensland Council.

www.qra.qld.gov.au/flood-risk/SAFRF



The Queensland Government has delivered the <u>Statewide Assessment of</u> Flood Risk <u>Factors</u> as the first comprehensive statewide assessment of flood risk management processes, based on analysis of kay flood risk factors, across every Local Government Area in Queensland.

This initiative has been coordinated by the Queensland Reconstruction

This make the second containers by the Contraction of Contraction Authority (CRA) in consultation with councils, industry and other state agencies. It is a CRA action under the <u>Counstand Flood Floid Floi</u>

The Statewide Assessment of Flood Risk Factors will be used to guide investment needs across the state to support implementation of the Framework to ensure our communities are aware, prepared and resilient to flooding.

The Technical Report for the Statewide Assessment of Flood Risk Factors details the project backgr purpose, project principles, terminology, analysis, trends, references, and frequently asked question:

Find out more at vw.gra.gld.gov.au/flood-risk/SAFRF

Floodplain Management Australia (FMA)

QRA recently proudly sponsored the 62nd annual Floodplain Management Australia (FMA) conference in Sydney, which brought together over 500 flood experts from Australia and abroad.

Ella Harrison Director – Flood Risk Management Resilience and Recovery, presented on the topic 'Preparing Queensland for the Unpredictable,' showcasing QRA's work and emphasising the importance of proactive measures.



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RESILIENCE

QRA is responsible for coordinating the development and implementation of whole-of-government policies for managing flood risks and improving the resilience of communities and facilitating mitigation against potential disasters.

As the most disaster-prone state in Australia and with on-going disaster impacts across the state, QRA is continually considering new ways to improve the safety and resilience of Queensland communities. This includes building trusted, reciprocal and robust relationships with community leaders, thought-leaders, and local, state, Commonwealth and international partners, and participating in a wide range of activities to inform our policies.

NON-DRFA RESILIENCE FUNDING PROGRAMS

Along with QRA's lead role in managing and coordinating Queensland's program of recovery and reconstruction funding within disaster-impacted communities, QRA also administers a range of disaster resilience funding programs on behalf of the State.

A number of resilience funding programs are currently in delivery helping to strengthen the disaster resilience and preparedness of Queensland communities.

STATUS OF ACTIVE NON-DRFA (RESILIENCE) GRANTS PROGRAMS ADMINISTERED BY QRA

Program	Approved \$	Approved projects
Queensland Resilience and Risk Reduction Fund (2019-20)	\$13.1M	68
Queensland Resilience and Risk Reduction Fund (2020-21)	\$13.1M	57
Queensland Resilience and Risk Reduction Fund (2021-22)	\$13.1M	33
Managing Disaster Risk (2020-21)	\$6M	25
Managing Disaster Risk (2021-22)	\$6M	20
North Queensland Natural Disasters Mitigation Program	\$10M	22
Recovery and Resilience Grants – Stream 1 (2020-21)	\$11.5M	66
National Flood Mitigation Infrastructure Program (2020-21)	\$4.1M	3
National Flood Mitigation Infrastructure Program (2021-22)	\$0.894M	2

Resilience and Recovery Research



During May 2023, QRA has progressed some key research work. QRA provided feedback into research papers developed through the Natural Hazards Research Australia (NHRA), including the Community Experiences of the 2022 Australian Floods Paper. The paper provides some interesting insights which can be used to further recovery and resilience policy into the future.

QRA's research engagement activities in May included:

 Attending the NHRA Research Forum which bought together a diverse group of people from research, government, industry and community, providing an opportunity to share knowledge and learn more about the current state of natural hazards research to impact the future.

- Meetings with representatives from the Queensland Disaster Research Alliance to discuss opportunities for collaboration and ensuring recovery and resilience programs are informed by proactive research.
- Presented on QRA's proposed research approach at the Griffith University internal Disaster Management Forum.

QRA representatives also provided a guest lecture at the Griffith University Australia Awards Short Course on Integrating Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction – South Asia to provide insights into how QRA works with communities in Queensland and provided a walkthrough of key online resources for drafting local recovery and resilience strategies.



Office of the Inspector-General of Emergency Management (IGEM) Review into Queensland's Disaster Management Arrangements

The IGEM has released their review into the Queensland Disaster Management Arrangements. The review marks a significant milestone in QRA's evolution, with several recommendations that directly reflect additional responsibilities for QRA in the areas of resilience, risk reduction and disaster preparedness. The Queensland Government has accepted all recommendation in-principle, with state agencies working together to develop an action plan for the implementation of the Review's recommendations over the coming weeks.



GRQ is a year-round, community resilience program that helps Queenslanders prepare for disasters. The program integrates a state-wide research driven awareness campaign led by QRA, alongside a grass roots grants program providing \$2M across Queensland's 77 councils and the Weipa Town Authority to deliver locally-led disaster preparedness initiatives.

Panel discussion highlights need for inclusive disaster preparedness

GRQ was invited by Ethnic Communities Council Queensland (ECCQ) to contribute to an important discussion panel at the Queensland Executive Multicultural Service Sector Network meeting in May.

The event saw executives from the state's multicultural sector discuss emergency preparedness and response in terms of policy and practice.

The meeting featured notable speakers from the Scanlon Foundation, Queensland Police Service, Office of Inspector-General of Emergency Management and Get Ready Queensland.

The panel discussion explored Queensland's Disaster Management Arrangements framework within the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Communities and opportunities to better connect these communities with their local councils.

Multicultural service providers had been seeking information and advice about engaging with local and district disaster management groups, and relevant state agencies in their regions. The ECCQ event proved valuable in strengthening those networks.

The attendees showed keen interest in enhancing the development of disaster-related communications that target their communities. For GRQ, the event was an opportunity to broaden the reach of important preparedness messages for CALD communities across Queensland.



GRQ's Faye Gibson with other presenters at the Queensland Executive Multicultural Service Sector Network meeting

Photoshoot captures importance of partnerships

It was far from an average day at the office for GRQ recently when sponsor, Suncorp, hosted the team for a photoshoot alongside the Queensland SES. The images promote the partnerships between the organisations, all of which have the common goal of building disaster resilience within Queensland communities.

The photoshoot took place at the SES headquarters in Brisbane in May... a unique use of their equipment shed.

Suncorp has been GRQ's major sponsor since 2019, making it possible for GRQ's disaster preparedness campaigns to reach more households across the state. Meantime, the SES continues to be an important stakeholder, playing a critical role community education.



On set at the Suncorp photoshoot with GRQ and the SES

Councils gather for GRQ update

In May, GRQ hosted the Get Ready Queensland Local Government Community of Practice meeting, with 40+ council representatives dialling-in to get the latest news.

The gathering is held every two months and gives Queensland's councils and GRQ the chance to share and discuss resources, activities, events, and other updates. The May meeting provided a significant update in relation to the:

- 2023 Resilient Australia Awards nominations
- 2023 Get Ready Queensland Grants
- New Brand GRQ Guidelines & Collateral Packages
- 2023 Get Ready Week
- Get Ready Queensland Risk Campaign.

The group then discussed operationalising new artificial intelligence technology for tasks such as translating communications materials and drafting content. It was agreed there are potential benefits for using the new online tools, but organisational protocols should be considered and followed.

The next Community of Practice meeting will be held in July 2023.

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

COOROORA TRAIL REOPENS

The 2019 Queensland bushfires had a devastating effect on bush tracks throughout the Noosa region.

Seven separate bushfires raged from August 2019 to January 2020, affecting almost 21,500 hectares across the Great Sandy National Park (Cooloola Recreation Area), Noosa National Park, and adjacent reserves.

The Queensland Reconstruction Authority mobilised quickly to establish the \$36.8 million Local Economic Recovery (LER) Program in the immediate aftermath of the fire.

This initiative has supported projects that contribute to local, regional, economic and social recovery, such as upgrades to Noosa's Cooroora Trail.

The 10km track, also known as Trail 5, links Pomona to Cooran through Tuchekoi National Park.

The \$1.68 million upgrade works include trail realignments, selective widening, resurfacing, drainage improvements, and new wayfinding and interpretive signage.

Recycled asphalt was also applied to a small section of the trail susceptible to flooding to increase durability and reduce maintenance requirements.

The material is created by milling an existing road surface and mixing the particles with a binder, before applying to the trail surface and rolling it out.

Recycled asphalt strengthens the trail surface, making it more resistant to future storm and flood damage, as well as generally requiring less maintenance.

It's also an eco-friendly material that uses less raw material than new asphalt, diverts waste materials from landfill, and unlike new asphalt can be laid cold, which reduces installation costs.

The first project to come out of the Noosa Trails Masterplan, the Cooroora Trail upgrades are designed to improve town connectivity, increase the use of the trails for educational and recreational use, and drive tourism.

The works being delivered through the masterplan will also enhance the effectiveness of the Noosa trail network as a series of firebreaks throughout the bushland.

The Cooroora Trail upgrade received \$1.61 million from the Australian and Queensland Governments' LER Program through joint Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA), which support projects that grow community resilience and drive economic recovery.

Following the success seen along Trail 5, priority upgrades of Trail 7 (Yurol Trail) will follow later in 2023.



Noosa Mayor Clare Stewart and QRA CEO Major General Jake Ellwood (Retd) with trail users



Walking and riding the Cooroora Trail

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

WORKS UNDERWAY ON BRISBANE ROAD EMBANKMENT SLIP

Both eastbound lanes along Brisbane Road are now open following the completion of embankment repairs.

Unprecedented rain during the South East Queensland Rainfall and Flooding event – including a total of 574mm in four days at nearby Ebbw Vale from 25 to 28 February 2022 – impacted the road and the rail corridor that runs alongside the road.

The embankment slipped into the rail corridor, which resulted in the closure of one eastbound lane of Brisbane Road between High and Taylor Streets for safety.

Although the full extent of damage was not visible from the surface, it was significant, with cracks about 800mm into the left lane on Brisbane Road and a damaged zone extending four metres deep into the road.

Transport and Main Roads (TMR) and Queensland Rail engineers worked closely to develop a solution ensuring safety for road and rail users while also working to reopen both eastbound traffic lanes on Brisbane Road as a priority.



Brisbane Road – rail corridor running alongside the road at the damage site (March 2022)



Brisbane Road – completed works (April 2023)

Following initial 'make safe' work, geotechnical investigations and design, repairs commenced in late October 2022.

The nature of the work, the need to keep one eastbound lane open, and the complexity and safety requirements of working next to a rail corridor meant the repairs were not straightforward. The challenging works involved drilling 22 large piles to a depth of about 12 metres below the road level, pile capping, drainage works, surface works and guardrail installation.

Works were completed ahead of schedule and both eastbound lanes reopened on 20 April 2023.

Assistance will be provided through the jointly funded Commonwealth-State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA).



Brisbane Road – part of the 800mm crack next to the road (March 2022)



Brisbane Road – completed works (April 2023)

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

MOONIE HIGHWAY CROSSING IMPROVEMENTS COMPLETED

Works completed on an essential Western Downs freight route will make it better able to withstand severe weather and minimise supply chain disruptions.

The Moonie Highway between Dalby and St George, including the crossing at Stephens Creek, sustained significant damage from a series of unprecedented heavy rainfall and flooding events between November 2021 and May 2022.

Stephens Creek crossing is halfway between Dalby and St George on the Moonie Highway and was inundated by floodwaters for several weeks.

Once floodwaters receded, Transport and Main Roads undertook emergency repairs to keep this essential freight route – which connects the Western Downs with the Port of Brisbane – open.

Reconstruction works commenced in January 2023 and were completed in mid-April 2023 to build Stephens Creek crossing back better than before the weather event. The crossing was reshaped to improve water run-off and prevent further erosion damage from floodwaters.

The repair works were delivered through assistance provided under the jointly funded Commonwealth-State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA).

The betterment works were delivered as part of a program of improvements to essential public assets damaged during last year's flooding, through the Australian and Queensland Governments' \$170 million Betterment Fund for 2021–22. This extraordinary assistance is provided through the DRFA.



Moonie Highway (Dalby–St George) – water over road (March 2022)



Moonie Highway (Dalby–St George) – floodway reconstruction works (January 2023)



Moonie Highway (Dalby–St George) – floodway reconstruction works (January 2023)



Moonie Highway (Dalby–St George) – completed works (April 2023)



Moonie Highway (Dalby–St George) – completed works (April 2023)